

# Helen Dahlstrom fonds

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University of British Columbia Archives



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## Fonds Description

**Helen Dahlstrom fonds.** – 1929-1999, predominant 1968-1999.

1.04 m of textual records.

24 photographs : b&w and col. ; 20 x 25 cm or smaller.

### Biographical Sketch

Helen Dahlstrom (nee Underbakke) was born in Regina, Saskatchewan of Norwegian-Canadian parents on 5 June 1917. She had two children with Alton Dalhstrom, Carol Boldt and Dr. David Dahlstrom. She is a pianist, organist, accompanist, music teacher, choir conductor, examiner and adjudicator. She received her teachers diploma in piano (ACTM) from the Toronto Conservatory of Music in 1930, her Solo performers diploma (RMT) in 1932 from the Toronto Conservatory of Music, and her Licentiate of Music diploma (LMUS) from the University of Saskatchewan in 1934. Her primary music education with Cyril Hampshire at the Regina Conservatory of Music from 1929 to 1935, was followed by a summer internship in 1935 with Stephen Balogh at the Cornish School in Seattle. In 1944 she moved to Winnipeg and took private lessons with Leonard Heaton until 1946 and from 1947 to 1949 with recitalist and teacher Boris Roubakine in Calgary. She started her career as a pianist at the age of 16 when she played the Schumann *Concerto* with the Regina Symphony Orchestra. In 1940, she was accompanist for John Goss on a tour of Western Canada and continued accompanying other instrumentalists in recitals including Elfreda Gleam and Reginald Kell. She was frequently heard as a soloist on radio stations; from 1940 to 1943 on CJRM, in Regina and from 1945 to 1947 on CBC Radio, in Winnipeg. In 1950, she moved to Rossland, British Columbia, where she served as organist-choirmaster for St. Andrews United Church. In 1964, she became conductor of the *A Capella Singers* of the Rossland Trail branch. She led this choir in various south east British Columbia centres for almost ten years.

Dahlstrom has served on numerous boards for the furtherance of the arts both provincially, nationally, and internationally. Provincially, she was president of British Columbia Registered Music Teachers Association (BCRMTA) from 1970 to 1972, and member of the British Columbia Arts Board where she served as chairman of the Music Committee, as chairman of the Fine Arts Division of the Academic Council, as committee member of the Arts and Education Council, and as board member of the Touring Council. Nationally, she was a member of the Regional Committee for the Explorations program of the Canada Council between 1979 and 1980, board member of Canada Council, president of the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers Association (CFMTA) from 1971 to 1975, national chairman of Canada Music Week (CMW) from 1969 until the mid 1990s, and member of the board of Governors of the Canadian

Conference of the Arts from 1979 to 1983. Internationally, she was a member of the European Piano Teachers Association (EPTA), and board member of the International Society of Music Educators (ISME) for Canada. Since 1965, she has also adjudicated a number of festivals, examinations and competitions across North America; places include the Royal Conservatory of Music in Toronto from 1984 to 1989; the Western Board of Music for the Universities of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba; Mount Royal College in Calgary; the international competition at Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1986; and the Young Keyboard Artists Association competition at Los Angeles, California in 1989. In 1989 she received the Home of Champions Award in recognition of her dedication, achievement and contribution to the Arts in the Home of Champions in Trail, British Columbia. She is listed in the *Encyclopedia of Music in Canada* (1992) and in *Women of Notes: 1,000 women composers born before 1900* (1978). She compiled and edited *Canada Music Week Silver Anniversary Collection* (1985) and the *Canadian Composers: mini biographies* (1989) which is now part of the music syllabuses of the Royal Conservatory of Music of Toronto and of the Western Board of Music.

### **Custodial History**

The fonds remained in the custody of Helen Dahlstrom until July 1999 when she donated it to William Bruneau of the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. Bruneau subsequently transferred the whole of the fonds, which had been stored in three boxes, to the University Archives on 15 November 1999.

### **Scope and Content**

Fonds consists of records generated by Helen Dahlstrom's activities in her capacity as a pianist, accompanist, music teacher, choir conductor, examiner, adjudicator, and as a member of national, provincial and international arts and music boards. The records relate to personal and administrative daily activities concerning music and the arts mainly in western Canada but also to a lesser extent in the United States, England, France and Africa. The records consist of personal and administrative correspondence, newspaper clippings, concert programs, newsletters of music associations, bibliographies of chief Canadian composers, material relating to music teaching, histories of music associations and musicians, curriculum vitae, speeches, Canadian music sheets, jury lists and schedules of music examinations, music evaluation notes, financial records, grant proposals, promotional material, annual reports of music associations, minutes of meetings of music associations, and miscellaneous material. In addition to the textual records, the fonds consists of a small number of photographs. The records have been arranged into the following series: biographical material (1929-1993); personal correspondence (1940-1999); records relating to Canada Music Week committee (1970-1992); records relating to Music and Arts organizations (1968-1992); miscellaneous photographs (between 1970 and 1990).

## Notes

Title based on the provenance of the fonds.

The original arrangement of the fonds was reconstructed on the basis of file markings on the creators folders. Records that were not incorporated in the original scheme are filed according to their content and documentary form.

Most of the material is in English with some in French.

File list is available.

## Series Descriptions

**Biographical material.** -- 1929-1993, predominant 1968-1993.

9 cm of textual records.

2 photographs : b&w ; 20 x 25.

Series consists of records reflecting Dahlstroms music activities in Canada and the United States in her capacity as a pianist, accompanist, music teacher, choir conductor, examiner, and adjudicator. The records consist of a scrapbook, newspaper clippings, passenger receipts, travel claim vouchers, thank you notes, correspondence, speeches, concert programs, histories of Canadian music, *A Capella Singers* promotional material, examination lists, material relating to music teaching, jury schedules, competition policies, letters of confirmation of exam schedules, and photographs. The records are arranged according to documentary form and content.

Title based on the content of the series.

The series is arranged according to the original titles of the folders created by Helen Dahlstrom.

**Personal correspondence.** -- 1940-1999, predominant 1968-1999.

9 cm of textual records.

7 photographs : b&w and col. ; 17.5 x 12.5 or smaller.

Series consists of correspondence between Dahlstrom and friends, professional musicians, and music teachers from Canada as well as the United States and England. The main body of records consists of correspondence and telegraphs. Newspaper clippings, music programs, will, and photographs are also present and are treated as attachments to the main body of records. The records are arranged in alphabetical order according to the surname of the correspondent.

Title based on the content of the series.

The original arrangement was not evident. The series was subsequently arranged by the archivist. One exception to the arrangement scheme should be noted for one file. Although this file relates to Grace Ozuah, the creators file name *Africa* was maintained.

Some records in French.

**Records relating to Canada Music Week committee.** -- 1970-1992.

78 cm of textual records.

10 photographs : b&w and col. ; 17.5 x 12.5 cm or smaller.

Series consists of Dahlstroms records relating to the Canada Music Week committee. Canada Music Week (CMW) is an annual nation-wide festival sponsored by the Canadian Federation of Music Teachers Association (CFMTA) to introduce and stimulate a keener appreciation of Canadian music to students, teachers, and audiences; to encourage and promote Canadian music, musicians, and music teaching; and to emphasize the significance of music in society. Introduced in 1959 during the silver anniversary of CFMTA, it has become a regular event on the last week of November since 1969. The Canada Music Week Committee has nine provincial and other branch chairpersons, and a national chairperson. Dahlstrom became the third national chairperson in 1969. The Canada Music Week committee publishes a newsletter (since 1959 but regularly since 1969) with suggestions for activities and promotional material, and administers the national music writing competition to stimulate interest in music composing among young Canadian musicians. Dahlstrom has edited special issues of the newsletter. During Canada Music Week, special events and programs take place in each community under the responsibility of individual centers throughout Canada. The CBC broadcasts student recitals, gives capsule biographies of Canadian composers, panel discussions, and features Canadian music during the week. In 1985, the CFMTA and Waterloo Music Co published *The Canada Music week Silver Anniversary Collection* a book of piano solos by Canadian composers. This edition was compiled and edited by Dahlstrom and was the result of a juried competition. This series includes correspondence, drafts of newsletter, writing competition material, biographical material relating to Canadian music, curriculum vitae, speeches, Canadian music sheets, grant proposals, promotional material, news releases, radio announcements, annual reports, financial records, minutes of annual and biennial meetings of chief officers of the Canada Music Week committee, and photographs. The records are arranged according to documentary form and chronological order.

Title based on the content of the series.

The series is arranged according to the creators original folder titles.

**Records relating to Music and Arts organizations.** -- 1968-1992, predominant 1974-1992.

9 cm of textual records.

Series consists of records relating to provincial and national music and arts organizations. They include correspondence between Dahlstrom and other organizations such as Canada Council, Canadian Music Council, Canadian Conference of the Arts, Northwest Pacific Conference of the Arts, Canadian Federation of Music Teachers Association, British Columbia Arts Board, British Columbia Touring Council, British Columbia Registered Music Teachers Association and the Trail branch. The records also include letters of appointment, certificates of incorporation, societies act for the Pacific Conference of the Arts, constitution for the Pacific Conference of the Arts, petitions, and records relating to travel expenses. The records are arranged according to documentary form and content.

Title based on the content of the series.

No original arrangement was apparent. The arrangement of the series was created by the archivist by bringing together in one series the different documentary forms relating to the same arts and music organizations.

Some records in French.

Records of the CFMTA are also in the fonds at the National Archives of Canada.

**Miscellaneous photographs.** -- [between 1970 and 1990].

10 photographs : b&w and col. ; 17.5 x 16 cm or smaller.

1 p.

Series consists of photographs by unknown photographer(s). These photographs were created for private and for promotional use. Many of the photographs were used to promote the 1975 CFMTA convention. The series includes photographs of Dahlstrom and unidentified persons, as well as one of a comic strip. In addition to the graphic material, the series includes one textual record. The textual record is a typewritten dialogue describing one of the photographs. The material is arranged according to the content of the photographs.

Title based on the physical form of the records.

No original arrangement was apparent. The photographs were scattered loosely amongst the fonds with no immediate relationship with other records from other series of the fonds. They were subsequently brought together in this series to facilitate their access.



# File List

## Box 1

### BIOGRAPHICAL MATERIAL

- 1-1 Scrapbook
- 1-2 Music Career Memorabilia
- 1-3 Royal Conservatory re exams
- 1-4 Mount Royal examinations
- 1-5 YKAA
- 1-6 Western Board Expenses
- 1-7 University of Manitoba
- 1-8 Interprovincial Y.A.
- 1-9 Material relating to music teaching
- 1-10 A Capella Singers

### PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE

- 1-11 Correspondence with Dan Cameron
- 1-12 Correspondence with Howard Fergusson
- 1-13 Correspondence with John Goss
- 1-14 Correspondence with Clyde Gilmore
- 1-15 Correspondence with Cyril Hampshire
- 1-16 Correspondence with Bert Herridge
- 1-17 Correspondence with Lili Kraus
- 1-18 Africa

## Box 2

- 2-1 Correspondence with Walter Roberts
- 2-2 Correspondence with William Rose
- 2-3 Correspondence with Boris Roubakine
- 2-4 Correspondence with Harold Zabrack
- 2-5 Miscellaneous correspondence

## RECORDS RELATING TO CANADA MUSIC WEEK COMMITTEE

- 2-6 CMW correspondence 1970-1973
- 2-7 CMW correspondence 1974-1978
- 2-8 CMW correspondence 1979
- 2-9 CMW correspondence 1980
- 2-10 CMW correspondence 1981

### Box 3

- 3-1 CMW correspondence 1982
- 3-2 CMW correspondence 1983
- 3-3 CMW correspondence 1985
- 3-4 CMW correspondence 1986
- 3-5 CMW correspondence 1987
- 3-6 CMW correspondence 1988

### Box 4

- 4-1 CMW correspondence 1989
- 4-2 CMW correspondence 1990
- 4-3 CMW correspondence 1991
- 4-4 Silver Jubilee
- 4-5 Governments
- 4-6 Anniversary volume

### Box 5

- 5-1 Commissioned Works : Canada Council
- 5-2 Symphonies : Air Canada
- 5-3 Promotions
- 5-4 Canadian composers
- 5-5 CMW Biographies
- 5-6 Biography Requests
- 5-7 International Year of Music 1986
- 5-8 CBC TV

### Box 6

- 6-1 CMW Branch reports 1965-1992

- 6-2 Writing Competition Correspondence
- 6-3 Annual reports to CFMTA re CMW
- 6-4 CMW newsletter 1983
- 6-5 CMW newsletter 1984
- 6-6 CMW newsletter 1985
- 6-7 CMW newsletter 1986
- 6-8 CMW Financial statements 1977-1991

Box 7

- 7-1 CFMTA Provincial reports 1973-1979
- 7-2 CFMTA Provincial reports 1980-1985
- 7-3 CFMTA Provincial reports 1986-1991
- 7-4 CFMTA reports 1964-1977
- 7-5 CFMTA reports 1978-1982
- 7-6 CFMTA reports 1984-1986
- 7-7 CFMTA reports 1988,1991
- 7-8 CFMTA Minutes of Meetings 1967-1975

Box 8

- 8-1 CFMTA Minutes of Meetings 1976-1979
- 8-2 CFMTA Minutes of Meetings 1980-1985
- 8-3 CFMTA Minutes of Meetings 1986-1991
- 8-4 1985 CFMTA Convention

RECORDS RELATING TO MUSIC AND ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

- 8-5 Exploration program correspondence
- 8-6 Letters of appointment
- 8-7 Canadian Music Council correspondence
- 8-8 Canadian Conference of the Arts correspondence
- 8-9 Pacific Conference of the Arts correspondence
- 8-10 Letters of congratulations to CFMTA presidency
- 8-11 Canada Council
- 8-12 BC government expenses
- 8-13 British Columbia Touring Council correspondence
- 8-14 BCRMTA correspondence
- 8-15 Trail Branch Piano Fund

Box 9

MISCELLANEOUS PHOTOGRAPHS

- 9-1 CFMTA Banff Convention 1975
- 9-2 Helen Dahlstrom and others in unidentified 197- convention
- 9-3 Helen Dahlstrom and others in unidentified 198- convention
- 9-4 Group photograph of music students
- 9-5 Comic strip picturing Helen Dahlstrom and A Capella Singers